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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION
IN TAIWAN

11. LEAD STORIES: Top stories on Monday morning included an interview with South Korean President Lee Myung Bak, during which he expressed interest in the idea of concluding a regional free trade agreement in Northeast Asia.

12. "Improvement Expected in Relations between China and Taiwan" The liberal Asahi editorialized (3/23): "...Taiwan's Nationalist Party has made a comeback.... The relationship between China and Taiwan is expected to become more stable.... Improved cross-strait relations also benefit the U.S. and Japan, both of whom want to see stability in the region. We would like China to make efforts to increase international confidence by removing its missiles that face Taiwan and reviewing its naval buildup."

13. "New President Should Resume Dialogue with China" The business-oriented Nikkei's editorial stated (3/23): "Former Nationalist Party President Ma's victory in Sunday's presidential election in Taiwan will return the party to power for the first time in eight years. The result of the election may provide momentum for Taiwan to change its relations with China. The future of cross-strait relations will have a major impact on U.S.-China relations and Japan's national security. We hope President-elect Ma will resume dialogue with Beijing and work to create stability between China and Taiwan."

SCHIEFFER